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SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

NITISH KUMAR

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CHOUHAN TO OVERSEE KEY MEETING TO PICK NEW BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

The BJP on Sunday appointed Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan as the central observer for the election of its legislative party leader in Bihar

PROCESS ON TO FORM NEW STATE GOVERNMENT

A statement from the BJP headquarters said the parliamentary board has appointed Chouhan as "central observer for electing the leader of legislature party in Bihar". Chouhan's appointment sets in motion the process of the formation of a new government in Bihar after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar took oath as a member of Rajya Sabha on Friday

NITISH KUMAR LIKELY TO RESIGN ON TUESDAY

- Nitish has convened a meeting of his cabinet on April 14, following which the JD(U) president is expected to relinquish the CM's post
- Senior JD(U) leader and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Vijay Kumar Chaudhary said, "The new chief minister will be elected by the NDA, upon the recommendation of the BJP, which has a big role to play" | P8

11 AM

WHEN THE CABINET MEETING WILL BEGIN ON TUESDAY

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

ASHA BHOSLE: SEPTEMBER 8, 1933-APRIL 12, 2026

FOREVER YOUNG, ALWAYS DISTINCT

NAMRATA JOSHI

AGE is just a number" is an adage Asha Bhosle believed in and lived by. Among the many facets of her long, abundant, and well-spent inning—professional as well as personal—the most distinct was the versatile voice: hearty, playful, coquettish, saucy, sensuous, spiritual, soulful and energetic by turns and the one that stayed forever youthful and timeless, just like Asha Tai herself.

The fact that the sound of Asha remained robust was the reason why, in her over eight-decade long career in a notoriously ageist industry, she didn't just sing for multiple films but became the voice of several generations of actresses—from Meena Kumari to Zeenat Aman to Rekha, from her contemporary Shakila in the sad version of *Leke pehla pehla pyaar* in *CID* (1956) to someone who could well be her daughter's age, like Urmila Matondkar in *Tanha tanha yahan pe jeena* in *Rangeela* (1995).

She worked with possibly every major music director down the years: O P Nayyar, Shankar Jaikishan, Jaidev, Madan Mohan, Khayyam, the Burmans, A R Rahman and Sandeep Chowta. She sang duets with male singers across all ages, from Kishore Kumar, Mohammad Rafi, and Mahendra Kapoor to Sonu Nigam. Winner of several awards, including two National Awards, Asha received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2000 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2008.

However, these markers aside, Asha became a legend of playback singing because of the extraordinary ability to imbibe the personality of the actor, get into the mood of the moment, respond to the space and setting of the sequence and catch the emotive soul of a song with the amazing texture and timbre of her voice. She could become the innocent and impoverished street kids in *Boot Polish* (1954) in songs like *Nanhe munne bachche teri mutthi mein kya hai, Thehar zara o janewale, Chali kaunse desh* just as effortlessly as she'd be the sexy Helen in a cabaret club in *Piya tu ab to aaja* in Caravan (1971) or *Yeh mera dil* in Don (1978).

Asha's father, Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar, was an eminent musician himself, and so were the siblings—Lata Mangeshkar, Meena Khadikar, Usha Mangeshkar, and Hridaynath Mangeshkar. There had been tales of sibling rivalry between her and the legendary elder sister, Lata Mangeshkar, but both eventually carved enviable and influential niches for themselves and ruled the male-dominated industry with confidence and conviction.

The last of an entire generation of playback stalwarts of the Golden Era of Hindi film music, her clear vocalisation, perfect diction and right enunciation were enough for her to embrace a range of languages and dialects, both Indian and international. The range extended from classical, folk, bhajans to the Westernised cabarets and discos. P7, CE P1

Trump threatens to block Strait as US-Iran talks fail

AGENCIES @ Islamabad / Washington

US President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed the US Navy would immediately begin a "blockade" to stop ships from entering or leaving the Strait of Hormuz, after US-Iran peace talks in Pakistan ended with no agreement in sight.

Iran has demanded the right to collect tolls from vessels traveling through the strait, but Trump said no one who pays Tehran will "have safe passage on the high seas." He also threatened, yet again, to destroy Iranian energy infrastructure, telling *Fox News*: "I can take out Iran in one day."

Earlier in the day, the US and Iran ended 21 hours of face-to-face talks in Islamabad in a stalemate, leaving the fate of the tenuous two-week ceasefire unclear. The war that has killed thousands of people and shaken global markets has entered its seventh week.

The US delegation led by Vice President J D Vance and the Iranian delegation led by parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf had discussed how to advance a ceasefire already threatened by disagreements and Israel's continued attacks on Lebanon.

US Vice President J D Vance talks to Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir before flying out of Islamabad on Sunday | AP

DAY 44 | WAR WATCH

Vance, while leaving Pakistan after the talks, said the US had made its "final and best offer" for a deal, adding: "We'll see if the Iranians accept it."

Ghalibaf said on X that Washington was "unable to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round of negotiations". Iranian and US media said the main sticking points in the talks were the Strait of Hormuz and Tehran's insistence on a right to enrich uranium for civilian use.

Later, in a *Fox News* interview, Trump threatened to impose a 50% tariff on Chinese imports if Beijing tries to help the Iranian military. Trump did not name the other countries he expects to join the US Navy cordon and, before his post, many international capitals had called for the temporary truce in the Gulf to be preserved. "We're not going to let Iran make money on selling oil to people that they like... It's going to be all or none," he said.

The failure of the talks will raise concerns that a return to fighting could drive world energy prices higher and further damage shipping and oil and gas facilities in the Gulf.

Modi to address women's meet ahead of Parl session

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

AHEAD of an extended three-day special session of Parliament from April 16 to 18 to discuss amendments to Women's Reservation Act 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to address a first-of-its-kind "Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan" in Delhi on Monday.

As per sources, the conference is aimed at generating widespread support for amendment to the Women's Reservation Act 2023. It forms a part of the BJP's broader electoral strategy, bringing together eminent personalities and accomplished women from diverse fields to deliberate on the necessity of reserving seats for women in legislative bodies.

The Prime Minister's Office said the conference is being organised to reinforce the government's commitment to increase women's participation in shaping India's development trajectory. "It will highlight the increasing role of women in governance and leadership across all levels – from Panchayats to Parliament. The programme will underscore the importance of enhanced representation of women in decision-making processes... It will reflect the government's continued commitment towards women-led development as a central pillar of the vision for Viksit Bharat 2047", it said.

In September 2023, Parliament passed the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam', which provided for the reservation of one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

The provision to provide 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies was brought by amending the Constitution in 2023. However, it would have come into effect only after the completion of the delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2027 Census.

Cong seeks all-party meet after polls

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to PM Narendra Modi conveying that the special session of Parliament being convened to discuss women's quota is "a clear breach of the Model Code of Conduct". He demanded that an all-party meeting be called after the state elections are over | P7

Pay a premium fee, get swift GBA service

ANUBHAB ROY @ Bengaluru

THE Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has proposed the opening up of two "seva kendras" in each of its five city corporations, claiming to make services such as registration of births, e-khatas and many others faster and more transparent, at the payment of premium fees.

The obvious questions that emerge at this juncture are: why make new centres instead of making the existing ones function like they are supposed to, and more importantly, are basic necessities an exclusive domain of the privileged?

To achieve this, the GBA has floated a tender recently for private companies to bid and set the costs of 27 services, promised to be delivered under one roof. While the scheme appears to give relief to citizens from being extorted by middlemen and corporation staff, many people are of the opinion that concept is "absurd".

CONTINUED ON: P2

Phone in RR dugout: ACSU to investigate

GOMESH S & FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

A DAY after Rajasthan Royals manager Romi Bhinder was seen using a phone while sitting in the dugout – which could be in violation of Players and Match Officials Area protocol – during an Indian Premier League tie, BCCI said their Anti Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) will investigate the matter.

The incident occurred during the 11th over of the IPL tie between Royals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Friday night in Guwahati. Bhinder was using his phone in dugout while teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was seen taking a look at the screen during the broadcast. The ACSU have already begun their investigation.

"We have asked the ACSU to investigate and file a report on the incident," IPL Governing Council Chair Arun Dhumal told this daily. Are there any exceptions? Why was Bhinder using the phone? These are some of the questions the franchise will have to answer.

RCB BEAT MI BY 18 RUNS | P11

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RAKSHA V 95.83% SCIENCE
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